

The Evening World

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WHERE IT IS MOST NEEDED.

STATE INDUSTRIAL COMMISSIONER SAYER is convinced that there is as yet no real shortage of labor in New York but only ill-balanced conditions due to the fact that labor is badly distributed.

Every day, he asserts, the public employment bureaus receive large numbers of applications for jobs and only a small proportion of the applicants have been placed at work.

"There is plenty of labor, but the labor does not happen to be in the places where it is most needed."

Everything combines to keep constantly before the country the reminder of what the principle of selective draft in its wider application can be made to accomplish in increasing and concentrating the nation's productivity in time of war.

It is time the drafting of labor, which was one of the most promising possibilities of the selective draft proposition when the country first accepted it, began to be more practically and widely discussed.

The coal famine, for example, has brought out the fact that shortage of labor and the Sixteen-Hour law are preventing the railroads from working to anything like their full capacity at the all-important job of distributing food and fuel to the American people.

The country needs a full force of labor concentrated upon the railroads which do the biggest part of its carrying. It needs to have those roads worked twenty-four hours in the day and seven days in the week for the transportation of every ton that they can handle and deliver.

If these chief carriers of the nation are doing only a part of what they could do with more men to man their trains, then here is a place for the selective draft to do its first big work for war efficiency at home.

NOW TO PERPETRATE A PEACE.

THE Bolshevik truce with Germany—unhappily it has to pass also as a Russian truce with Germany—is in effect.

During the next month we shall have the spectacle of the Red element of the Russian Revolution, an element whose leaders have been saturated with German influence, endeavoring to perpetrate with the Imperial German Government a peace the terms of which shall fall short of outraging and exciting a different kind of Russian patriotism to the point of formidable counter-revolution.

It is a situation at which the Allies can only stand by and wait to see what sort of Russia will emerge out of the wretched business and whether there is enough Russian stamina left to stick even to an ignoble neutrality.

The Bolshevik rule is not Russia. But there seem to be no other forces in Russia positive or powerful enough to combine and save the nation from the ignominy toward which, in its revolutionized state, Bolshevism and the sly, persistent pressure of German purpose have been pushing it.

The best that can be said of Russia at the present moment is that she may have reached a stage deplorable enough to shock the better national spirit that is left in her into an awakening that shall carry scant comfort for those who have arranged this armistice.

NO MEXICAN CRISIS.

ANNOUNCEMENT by the State Department that the United States Ambassador to Mexico is returning to the country chiefly to enjoy a vacation at Christmas time, and that he is in no sense making a hurried departure from Mexico City without asking for passports, ought to set at rest rumors of an imminent Mexican crisis likely to call for the immediate despatch of American troops.

There is no doubt as to the origin of recent reports that relations between Mexico and the United States are near the breaking point, and that intervention in that quarter must soon be added to this nation's cares and burdens.

The Imperial German Government would be exceedingly glad to see the holiday season in the United States darkened by an intensified Mexican worry.

Propaganda to such purpose is part of the natural preparation, it would seem, for the new peace-feeler which the Kaiser is believed to have so beautifully timed for Christmas.

Americans, however, will accept the assurance of the State Department that there is no sudden or acute development in the Mexican situation, and disturb themselves but little over the clouds that German propagandists labor to roll up from the Rio Grande.

Letters From the People

Seeks Aid for the Poor at Home.
To the Editor of The Evening World:
Stupendous amounts are being sent to relieve the suffering in war-stricken Europe. The Nation's purse-strings have indeed been unloosed. We have only words of commendation for this unprecedented generosity. But we must not forget those at our own doors who will be in immediate and pathetic need during this coming Christmas.

Is not the public at this time apt to overlook the many whose requirements are just as pressing and whose dilemma is proportionately grave among those who surround us? It is to these the Volunteers of America would render some present and practical assistance in the way of a basket of substantial provisions to take into the home. May we not hope that some of the thousands who read your paper will send us something to render this practical relief?

Checks can be made payable to General Ballington Booth, No. 14 West 25th Street, New York City, N. Y.

Peace at Any Price!

By J. H. Cassel



Christmas Gifts and the War

By Sophie Irene Loeb

SHE came to me the other day, the little woman with the sweet voice. She could hardly see me, for her eyes are becoming sightless.

Her clothes were very, very neat. She wore a little straw hat that must have been bought years ago, and she showed great care to preserve them. She wore a little straw hat that must have been bought years ago, and she showed great care to preserve them.

It was all covered with a black veil so that you could not see the face. For poverty does not like to show itself.

She did not want any charity, this little woman; she only wanted to see her eyes better so that she could go back to sewing on buttons. She has sewed on millions of buttons for five dollars a week. She was willing to sew on many millions more.

But, alas, the one source of her livelihood was falling her—her eyes. For years and years this little woman has taken care of old people, and when I asked her why she had not found easier occupation she said: "Because these old people were so helpless and needed me. I had a mother once and would have liked some one to have been kind to her if she had been left childless."

This woman toiled to save others suffering, and sacrificed her own strength in the process.

Therefore, in years of struggles she had saved up a little money in the bank—against old age. She had no little or him, and always great comfort came to her when she reflected on three or four hundred dollars that seemed to safeguard her against charity or becoming a community charge.

And then the crash came. The bank went broke.

And all she wanted from me was to see if I couldn't get something out of the debris for her.

Could I, would I see the head of the concern and ask him if he would try to get some of her money back? She wanted no aims. She wanted her own. She was loath to accept even the slightest assistance in the way of money.

Despite her ridiculously low wages she managed to save a few dollars.

The Jarr Family

By Roy L. McCardell

"THE week before Christmas," mused Mrs. Jarr, "the week before Christmas! Oh, dear, son at all, and I simply can't get myself to believe that Christmas is only a few days off."

"It is, though, it is," remarked Mr. Jarr. "It's an old saying that Christmas comes but once a year, but the older one gets the shorter the years seem. When I was a boy it seemed an age between Christmas and Fourth of July, and now the holidays race past like the pallid on a picket fence that one is running by."

"It isn't that," said Mrs. Jarr. "But this year, with everything so dear, I really haven't got the money to buy a lot of foolish things for the children. Little Emma wants Santa Claus to bring her a new doll and a liddy car and a set of dishes and a new dress and a new coat and a new hat—that's a good thing about a little girl. A little girl appreciates clothes as Christmas gifts. But when I started to hunt to our Willie that Santa Claus would only bring him new shoes and a new overcoat and a suit of clothes he carried on terribly. Said he didn't want clothes, that he got clothes any way, but that he did want a motorcycle and a gun and a soldier's uniform and an electric train. He said he wouldn't believe in Santa Claus if he didn't get the things he wanted."

"Do you really think our Willie believes in Santa Claus?" asked Mr. Jarr. "He gets out with older boys, you know, and this is a skeptical age."

"I think he believes in Santa Claus before Christmas, anyway," replied Mrs. Jarr. "He will soon be old enough to be disillusioned, and while we can't think it is well to preserve the simple faith of our boy in the sweet old myths of the holiday season."

"I don't see how you are going to preserve the sweet old myths of the holiday season so far as Willie is concerned if you insist on giving him practical and useful gifts, such as an overcoat and shoes, which, as he truthfully says, he will get anyway at any time of the year. He seems to stand by his faith in Santa Claus, and so Santa Claus must make good with the things the boy expects from Santa Claus."

"Well, I can't get him a motorcycle and a gun—I'm afraid of a gun about the house, anyway," said Mrs. Jarr. "As for a motorcycle, that's out of the question. He's too young for a motorcycle. He needs clothes, and he needs shoes, and I have put off getting them until Christmas."

"You're right," said Mr. Jarr. "I'll have to get him a motorcycle and a gun—I'm afraid of a gun about the house, anyway," said Mrs. Jarr. "As for a motorcycle, that's out of the question. He's too young for a motorcycle. He needs clothes, and he needs shoes, and I have put off getting them until Christmas."

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Americans Under Fire

By Albert Payson Terhune

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NO. 51—VALLEY FORGE
THIS is not the story of a battle, yet it belongs most rightfully to the chronicles, "Americans Under Fire." For it deals with the heroism of our ancestors in the darkest hour of the Revolution and when they were tortured by greater anguish than the mere presence of enemies could have inflicted.

It is the story of the terrible winter at Valley Forge. In the winter of 1777-1778 and not very long after the "freak" battle of Germantown—a battle that might have won the whole war in one blow but for a single strange accident—Washington moved his worn-out little army into winter quarters. He chose Valley Forge as the place for wintering. For it was not far from Philadelphia, which the enemy held; and from Valley Forge he could menace the enemy. To Valley Forge, then, the Father of His Country withdrew his men. There, in tents and in makeshift barracks, they prepared to spend the winter.

The weather was frightfully cold. The men had not enough fire or food or clothes. They lived in crowded, dark, and stormy huts. Washington himself started their hardships. So did his wife, who spent her days nursing sick soldiers and in knitting and cooking for them.

"As the poor soldiers marched to their winter quarters," says Fluke, "their route could be traced on the snow by the blood that oozed from bare and frost-bitten feet. For want of blankets many of them sat up all night by their scanty fires. Cold and hunger daily added to the sick list. In the crowded hospitals (which were for the most part mere log huts or frail wigwams woven of twisted boughs) men sometimes died for want of straw to put between themselves and the frozen ground on which they lay."

Yet Washington kept them busy, these starving and freezing heroes. Daily his drill masters had them out on the parade ground marching and counter-marching and going through the Manual of Arms until they were ready to drop.

This severe treatment gradually turned the half-organized force into a splendid fighting machine which was to do valiant service for our country. So the seeming cruelty of it was only a phase of Washington's wisdom. Washington wrote to Congress:

"I have here 2,500 men unfit for duty because they are barefoot and otherwise naked."

His complaint brought no good results. The winter dragged on like a nightmare of hunger and cold and lack of necessities.

History tells much of the sufferings of Valley Forge. But history also leaves it to be supposed that these sufferings were necessary because our country was so poor, which is not true.

Every farmer and merchant who heard of the hardships at Valley Forge hastened to send food or clothes or firewood or money to relieve the distress. And not one of these supplies reached the soldiers.

"Hogsheads of shoes and stockings and clothing and provisions were lying at different places on the roads and in the woods, perishing for want of teams or of money to pay the teamsters."

The Commissary Department appointed by Congress was rotten with graft or inefficiency or both. The Commissary let the troops starve and freeze because it was too lazy or stupid to feed them. Washington could not move Congress to act in the heroes' behalf. For in Congress there was a strong faction that sought his overthrow and hampered his every move. To quote Fluke again:

"When one thinks of these sad consequences wrought by a negligent Quartermaster and a deranged Commissariat, one is strongly reminded of the remark made by Charles Lee when he described the Continental Congress as 'a stable of stupid cattle that stumbled at every step.'"

Bachelor Girl Reflections

By Helen Rowland

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NOW comes the merry Yuletide, when the children hang up their stockings, Mother hangs up the holly, and Father "hangs up" everybody from the landlord to the toeman.

A man loses his illusions about women with his baby teeth, his sentiment about them with his top hair, and his curiosity about them with his last breath.

Just now a wife's glowing opinion of her husband's intellect and ability is apt to be suddenly dimmed when she watches him struggling to tie up a Christmas package that a twelve-year-old girl bundle-wraper could have successfully turned out in two minutes.

There would be infinitely more heart-happiness in the world if men only knew when to begin making love and women only knew when to stop.

This is the psychological time of year when the bachelor with an empty hearth and the married man with empty pockets scarcely know whether to envy or to pity each other.

Christmas giving: Exchanging something you want, but can't afford to buy, for something you don't want from somebody who can't afford to give it to you.

Long after a woman has forgotten a man's last name she still remembers his first kiss.

When is a lie not a lie? When you tell it to your wife—then it's merely "camouflage."

A Dictionary of Trench Slang.

C.
Camouflage—A group of Russian reactionaries who were influential with the former Czar and Czarina.
Camel Brigade—British soldier's designation for the infantry on account of the appearance that the heavy pack gives the men.
Camion—A military truck.
Camouflage—Faking. A make-believe.
Carry On—To go ahead.
Cauliflower—A special shell with small wire wings fired from a trench cannon especially for breaking down barbed wire.
Cave Vault—Safety cellar for protection from airplane bombs.
C. C. S.—Casualty clearing station.
Clericals—A Russian political faction representing the Orthodox Greek Church. Were strong defenders of the Czar.
Coal Boxes—Shells from trench mortars.
Communique—An official report given out by the French Government.
Congregation of the Archangel St. Michael—A semi-religious reactionary Russian society formed in support of the Czar.
Consolidating a Position—The preparation of recently captured ground against a counter attack.
Constitutional Democrats—The most influential Liberal party in Russia.
Convoy—Naval escort for ships.
Cook's Tour—An official trip over a battle ground under the guidance of scouts for the benefit of officers and non-commissioned officers of a newly arrived army.
Counter Attack—An effort to recover a recently lost position.
Crater—Hole made by a high explosive shell.
Croix de Guerre—A French decoration for bravery.
Croix Rouge (French)—Red Cross.
D.
D. C. M.—Distinguished Conduct Medal.
Digging In—Making a trench or other protection while under fire.
Ditty Box or Bag (Navy term)—Receptacle for holding odds and ends.
Dziesie—Sugar loaf mounds at points where communicating trenches were.
Doing a Bit—Any service for the war.
Dolly Varden—British name for German hatlet.
Doloi! Doloi! (Russian)—"Down Down!" Corresponds to French "A bas!"
Doughy—An infantryman.
Dud—Originally a spent shell. Now applied to any false alarm.
Drum Fire—Uninterrupted firing.
D. S. G.—Germania Trommlerorden.
Duff Bag—A clothes bag.
Dugout—An underground shelter against shells or bombs.